DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 399 330 UD 031 295


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TITLE Black Studies, Rap and the Academy. Black Literature and Culture Series.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-226-03521-2
PUB DATE 93
NOTE 120p.
AVAILABLE FROM University of Chicago Press, 5801 South Ellis Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637 (paperback: ISBN-0-226-03521-2, $9.95; clothbound: ISBN-0-226-03520-4).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Black Culture; *Black Studies; *College Faculty; *Higher Education; *Intellectual Disciplines; Mass Media Role; *Popular Culture; *Urban Culture; Urban Youth
IDENTIFIERS Postmodernism; *Rap Music



ABSTRACT

The relationships among Black Studies as an intellectual discipline and rap music are explored. It is argued that black urban culture has provided much of the impetus for Black Studies, and that the academy and those involved in the black studies discipline should feel a responsibility to take rap music seriously as the expression of urban youth, black male youth in particular. Black Studies has gone beyond the ideas of traditional disciplines by laying claims to disciplinary status as an academic subject even as its energies removed the boundaries of subjectivity and disciplined academic knowledge. Mapping the force of black urban expressivity in its relationship to American law and order is a multivocal Black Studies enterprise that requires that rap music be taken seriously, both in its positive social manifestations and its negative. Rap has become an archive in which postmodernism is sampled for the future. It is the job of Black Studies to provide it an adequate hearing. (SLD)



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